CLAIMS:

1.   A transponder with firmware

-          which firmware comprise several overlaid layers (2, 12, 22) containing several software components known as function modules (3 to 11, 13 to 19),

-          where a bottom layer (2) contains the function modules (3 to 11) which
5   describe the functionality of the hardware components of the transponder,

-          and the function modules (13 to 19) of the layer (12) lying above the bottom layer (2) jointly form an application interface which can process an application software of various manufacturer-dependent central monitoring systems, and hence the same transponder can be used in different monitoring systems with different protocols and management
10   purposes

2.   A transponder as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that a network element belonging to the transponder is a network element of a hybrid fiber coax (HFC) network.

15   3.   A transponder as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the function modules (13 to 19) of the layer (12) lying over the bottom layer (2) are provided for access to the other function modules (3 to 11, 13 to 19) of the same layer and the bottom layer (2).

4.   A transponder as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that the upper layer (22)
20   is provided for access by a supplier of the central monitoring system and for the downloading of new application programs by the supplier of the central monitoring system, and in that the bottom layer (2) and the layer (12) lying over the bottom layer (2) are provided for access by the transponder manufacturer and for the downloading of function modules (3 to 11, 13 to 19) by the transponder manufacturer.
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5.   A transponder as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that hardware (1) forming the basis of the transponder is intended for exchange while the layer (12) lying over the lower layer (2) and the upper layer (22) can remain unchanged.